

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please make the following amendments;

Please add the following to paragraph [0016].

[0016] Thread is a 'tightly twisted strand of two or more plies of yarn. Human hair's structure consist of an outer keratin layer or cuticle of overlapping scales or shingles. African hair texture is unique in that it grows in a definitive spiral pattern. This spiral configuration combined with it's density and texture results in breakage with the use of improper hairstyling tools.

Implements marketed and used to style this hair type in particular have teeth with non tapered non pointed ends similar in design to the tail of this current hair weaving invention. US patent 6,006,965 by Andrew Hamann describes a tapered pointed needle shaft in which the "secondary eye 16c retains at least one of the plurality of threads by mechanical forces after being tugged through slot 26." With more than 100,000 hair follicles on the average person's head it would take more than a year to install dreadlocks using Hamann's invention. Hamann's eye has a pinched gate (20) which prevents the loose threads in the slot from sliding back into the larger eye. This would dictate the pinched gate is narrower in width than a human hair. The current invention's entire terminal portion, 14, holds braid sized sections of hair with pressure as and is gentler to hair strands as they do not have to pass through the pinched gate which acts as a saw on individual strands.

Hamann's tapered pointed needle shaft also act as an ice pick as the tapered design lifts the keratin structure on the hair shaft causing eventual breakage. Hamann's invention would also be extremely uncomfortable as it would puncture or abrade the scalp of those attempting to use this

device. The current invention does not have a tapered pointed end and is of a size suitable in relation to looping braid sized sections of hair as opposed to individual strands or threads. Individuals do not style their hair with tapered pointy implements and African textured hair, due to its unique physical characteristics, would suffer extreme abuse using tapered pointy or blunt implements.

Hamann's invention also sews thread into a permanently fixed designs attached to fabrics. As such, the loops are tight and non shifting so as not to change in design and retain it's original appearance throughout the life of the garment. The current invention allows for the tight weaving of intricate patterns of the hair however it ensures the loops are only tight enough to keep the dreadlocks from becoming undone. The loops formed by the current invention allow for the natural progression of matting or dreading to occur changing from the original appearance of the looping patterns initially installed.

Haman's smaller terminal eye size is stated to be 1/4 the length and no more than 2/3 the width of the main eye portion. These proportions are not adequate for looping braid sized sections.

Hair looping needle eye sizes are determined by dreadlock width and section sized on the scalp. Both eye sizes have to be large enough to accommodate the hair section and pass through pain free at the scalp. The second eye portion parameters defined by Hamann are to small to accommodate braid sections.

Please replace paragraph [0017] with the following paragraph.

[0017]
US pat. No. 2,740,568 issued to Ostergaard discloses a needle rigid shank and flexible head and eye. There is no part of this invention that can adequately secure braid sized sections of hair

through the multiple looping process.

Please add the following paragraphs.

[0018]

US Pat. No. 5,657,776 issued to Espenschied discloses a flat thin pointy needle used to pull scarfs through hair. The flat thin design would shear delicate hair strands during the repeated looping process and serve as an ice pick on hair and scalp. This design has no mechanism for securing hair and braid sized sections would slip out during the looping process.

[0019]

US Pat. No. 5,881,738 issued to Villani discloses a flexible needle with a paddle like feature on the end used to attach beads in hair. The needle has no feature to secure braid sized sections of hair and the paddle like end would distort if one would attempt to use it to loop hair.

[0020]

US Pat. No. 3,678,712 issued to Singleton is a two headed device with a crochet hook on one end and a sewing needle on the other. This design has no mechanism for securing braid sized sections of hair and the barbed section would become tangled during the process.

[0021]

US Pat. No. D553,849 issued to Snyder several years after the current invention's application was published, discloses a bulky button tool. This design in addition to Singleton, Villani, Espenscheid, and Ostergaard would require the reinsertion of braid sized sections of hair each time hair is looped. The time taken to reinsert hair at each loop would more than double the installation time of dreadlocks.

[0022]

US Pat. No. 559,108 issued to Stimson displays a needle with a hole embedded within the head and a small grooved section above the eye. Stimson claims state one can sew without using the slot. Braid sized sections of hair must be secured in order to form adequately stable loops. Furthermore the eye being embedded in the needle, as opposed to the shape of the needle as in the current invention would necessitate the head width being larger than the dreadlock base. this would result in painful hair styling and hair breakage. The main eye, groove, and general shape of the needle head are not the right proportion, shape or size to loop braid sized sections of hair.

[0023]

The numerous dreadlocks sometimes worn, call for a rigid, non distorting, smooth thin tool designed to hold braid sized sections of hair while forming the more intricate weaving patterns in kinky/curly to straight hair types in close confined spaces. Up until now no tool has been patented specifically, to form loop the very ancient dreadlock hairstyle. None of the above inventions is seen to describe the instant invention claimed.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS.

Please make the following amendments

General

Please remove the term pinched.

Please replace paragraph [0004] with the following statement

[0004] The needle FIG. 1 is constructed of sterling round wire, formed around a mandrel creating a circle and a tail. The circle is soldered closed. Next the circle end closest to the tail-probe is formed around a smaller mandrel creating two openings, the intermediate oval and the elongated terminal portion.

OPERATION OF INVENTION

Please make the following amendments

General

Please remove the term pinched.